

that as well and encourage people to go forward.

Again I say, you can only believe in this if you really believe not only in your own potential but the potential of every other American. This is a great country not because we are committed to one particular religious view, one particular racial view, one particular ethnic group. This is a country now where everybody can come and we say, "If you believe in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, if you're willing to work hard and show up tomorrow and play by the rules, you're our kind of American. You're part of our future." We want to build a bridge that you can walk across because we'll be stronger, too. We'll be stronger, too.

So I want to ask you—that's what this election is all about: a bridge to the future or a bridge to the past; a bridge to the future wide enough that we can all walk across or everybody trying to build their own little bridge and say we're on our own. I believe that my wife was right; I think it does take a village. We're better off when we help each other.

I believe that there is no country in the world—I don't just believe it, I know this—there is no country in the world as well-positioned for the 21st century as the United States. But we have to make some fundamental decisions. Do we really believe in opportunity for all, responsibility from all? Do we really believe that everybody who is willing to work hard has a part in our American community? If we believe that, and we're willing to build that bridge, America's greatest days are still ahead.

Will you help me build that bridge?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:26 p.m. in the college gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Robert L. McSpadden, president, and Dawn Roberts, student activities board president, Gulf Coast Community College. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Pete Peterson in Panama City

September 6, 1996

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you for being here. Thank you for waiting for us. You have no idea how hot it was in that rally. [Laughter] I'm surprised we've got the skin on our—[laughter]—it was wonderful. It was wonderful, as Lawton said, seeing the crowds coming in.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want you to know I came here for three reasons. I know no sitting President has been here before. The others didn't know what they were missing. But I came here, first of all, because Joe Chapman is my friend and he wanted me to come, and because his mother is the best politician I know and I wanted to see her, see if I couldn't get a few pointers.

The second reason I came here is that I did not want Pete Peterson to leave the Congress without my having a chance to come to his district and thank the people of his district for sharing him with the Nation and giving him to the Congress. He is a perfectly wonderful man.

I was really honored when he agreed to let me present his name to be the first Ambassador to Vietnam since the end of the Vietnam war. You can only imagine how momentous that appointment is, not only in our country but throughout Asia. The coming together of these countries, our effort to establish some decent and normal relations with them, our success in getting them to account for those people whom we still haven't accounted for who served in Vietnam and who are still missing, this is a huge emotional event for our country but also there. And it also has enormous political and commercial implications for our country over the long run. And I think there is no one in America who will serve our country better in every way and will embody everything that is best about America like Pete Peterson will. And I'm very grateful for this.

Third reason I'm here is, like Lawton said—what did you say? I want to try to remember what he said; it was one of those "he-coon" things. I think he said that no red-

neck wants a dog that won't bite. [Laughter] I think that's what he said.

I came here because the people that live up here are pretty much like the people that I represented for 12 years as Governor. They're better off than they were 4 years ago because of the policies we've pursued. Their children are going to have a better future if the path that I've laid out to build that bridge to the 21st century is followed than if the other people win. And I think the people here ought to be given a chance to sort of drop their blinders and join us and go on into the future together.

And I'm glad to fight. I'm going to fight for Florida. I'm going to fight for north Florida. I'm not going to give up any place. And I want you to help me win this State, and I hope you will, for yourselves and your children.

Let me also tell you that when I saw those people on the street today—and I knew that our loyal opposition had taken out a big newspaper ad and asked all the folks to come down and get signs and say I shouldn't be here, you know—there were a few of them on the road. They did a pretty good job, but they were just overwhelmed by real people. [Laughter] You know, I mean, other citizens. They did a good job.

But I want to tell you, there is something going on in this country. When Hillary and Chelsea and I went to Huntington, West Virginia, to start to take that train to the Democratic Convention, there were about 20,000 people in Huntington, West Virginia. And we made I think 11 or 12 or 13 scheduled stops, something like that, in 3 days and a late afternoon and a night. We had 2 crowds with fewer than 10,000 people there. We had 4 crowds with 20,000 or more.

We got to East Lansing, Michigan, where Michigan State is. There are a lot of young people there. But they were having a Crosby, Stills, and Nash concert there that night, and there were 10,000 young people in that concert. There were still over 20,000 people there in this huge field when we stopped the train. We had over 30,000 people in Michigan City, Indiana, a State that a Democrat hasn't carried in forever. And there were thousands of people along the road. We would slow down in these little towns with

2,000 people and not even stop the train, and there would be 1,000 people there at 11 o'clock at night, kids out there waving their flags.

And the same thing on the bus tour: where we wouldn't even stop, these people would just be along the road, and we didn't have time to stop everywhere.

I went to De Pere, Wisconsin, for Labor Day. It's a suburb of Green Bay, which itself is not a very big town. And that's the most Republican part of Wisconsin. The suburb has 22,000 people, population. There were over 30,000 people around the lake that day for this rally—that we magged, that we magged and counted.

Now, I think people are coming out because they know we're better off than we were 4 years ago. They know we're on the right track. They know there is a clear choice, and they're prepared to fight for it and for their children's future. And that's what I'd like to ask you to do.

It is no accident that it's been 50 years since a Democratic—60 years, 60 years since a Democrat won a second term, when President Roosevelt won in 1936. And then, of course, he won two more terms, and the war came. And it hasn't happened since then. That is not an accident.

And the Republicans have been very skilled in their Presidential campaigning, and in times past they have been very skilled at demonizing us and making us look like we didn't represent mainstream values. But you know, families are stronger. There are more jobs. The streets are safer. The environment is cleaner. And our future is brighter than it was 4 years ago. And the policies we followed were almost all—not all but almost all opposed by the leaders of the other party, including Senator Dole.

And if you look at the future and what the two of us propose, building a bridge to the future is a lot better way to get there than building a bridge to the past. It just is; it is a better way to get there. And it is true that we've got some problems today we didn't have 30 or 40 years ago. It's also true that there are a lot of things that are better today than they were 30 or 40 or 50 years ago.

It is also true that there is literally—this is something I know, not something I believe, something I know and something that as President I am in a position to know—there is no nation in the world today as well-positioned as the United States to move into the next century, none—no country that has our combination of entrepreneurial skills, our research and technology base, our outward-looking contacts with the rest of the world, our work ethic, and our diversity. Nobody has got all of that in any other country.

And what we have to do is, as I have said until I'm blue in the face, build a bridge to the future that gives opportunity to everybody, expects responsibility from everybody, and then says, if you are willing to share our values and play by the rules, we don't care anything else about you. You don't have to tell us anything else. We don't care about what your race is, whether you're a man or woman, whether you're old or young, whether you've got a disability. We don't care. If you're willing to do your best and be a part of this, our bridge is going to be big enough for you to go across, because we'll all be better off if you're better off. And we're going to have an American community. And my wife is right: It does take a village. And we are going to do it together.

Now, what I want to ask you is, I want to ask you to forget about the polls. There's a lot of elections where they could have a bonfire on election night burning the polls that turned out to be wrong. If all the polls had been right, Lawton wouldn't be Governor. [Laughter] And a poll is a picture of a horse race that's not over. That's all it is. But the people now are voting their hopes, not their fears. The people are now voting the facts, the evidence, the ideas, not the insults, the innuendoes, the assaults. That's what they're doing.

We really have succeeded in replacing the politics of blame in Washington with the politics of "What are we going to do about it?" and that's good. But we've got 60 days to go. And if you want 4 more years, and if you want us to go into the 21st century with the American dream alive for everybody, and if you're willing to rear back and fight, then remember this: You cannot have 4 more years without 60 more days.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 7:30 p.m. in the Student Union East Building at Gulf Coast Community College. In his remarks, he referred to area businessman Joseph Chapman III and his mother, Gladys, Bay County supervisor of elections. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on the Tentative Agreement Between the International Association of Machinists and McDonnell Douglas *September 6, 1996*

I am pleased that the International Association of Machinists and McDonnell Douglas have reached a tentative agreement and congratulate both parties for working around the clock to settle their differences at the bargaining table. McDonnell Douglas workers are among the best defense workers in the world and I am hopeful that the 6,700 workers that have been on strike will be back at their jobs soon. I also commend Representative Gephardt for initiating this round of talks and for keeping both sides at the table.

When labor and management work together to resolve their differences, the company and the workers benefit. In this case, all Americans will benefit from having an experienced workforce back at their jobs, filling critical aerospace orders for our military.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Message on the Observance of Rosh Hashana, 1996 *September 6, 1996*

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Rosh Hashana in this season of redemption and renewal.

On this holy occasion, the resonant sound of the shofar summons Jews around the world to remember and reflect upon the triumphs and tragedies of the previous year. This call, celebrating the year 5757, asks all of us, Jews and non-Jews alike, to reassess and appraise our lives and to seek deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us. During this time of introspection,